



The Resurrection

Matthew 28:1-15; Mark 16:1-13; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-18



On the cross, Jesus took all of our sins onto His perfect body. He died to pay the penalty for our sin. But death could not hold the King of kings and Lord of lords in the grave! On the third day, Jesus was raised to give us new life.

Day #1: Scared Soldiers

After Jesus died, the Jewish leaders told Pilate that they thought the disciples would steal Jesus' body and tell everyone He had risen. Pilate sent armed soldiers to guard the tomb (Matthew 27:62-66). Isn't it interesting that the Pharisees and leaders were still afraid of Jesus even after they had Him killed?

Think about the soldiers guarding the tomb of a dead Man. There they were, in a graveyard all night long. They had certainly heard all about this Jesus. They may have even been involved in nailing Him to the cross. Surely, in the stillness of the night, they must have thought about who Jesus was. Did they wonder why so much attention was paid to this Man, if he was just an average criminal? Did they wonder if maybe He was the One sent from God? Whatever they were thinking, their thoughts were interrupted very early the next morning when the very ground they were standing on began to shake.

+ *There was a powerful earthquake. An angel of the Lord came down from heaven. The angel went to the tomb. He rolled back the stone and sat on it. His body shone like lightning. His clothes were as white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. - Matthew 28:2-4*

Wow! An angel appeared like lightning, splitting the darkness of the early morning. The sight of this angel was so stunning that the soldiers were petrified! These guards were wearing weapons and they knew how to use them. But the sight of the angel scared them nearly to death. God's power was far greater than that of the guards.

***** If only the soldiers had known the promises of God, they would have jumped for joy when the stone rolled away and Jesus stepped out into the morning air. One day Jesus will return. Will you be excited to see Him or do you fear that day? If you have a relationship with Him, you will be overjoyed to see Him face to face.

Day #2: Empty Tomb

Have you ever seen a cartoon where the artist draws a light bulb over a person's head? The light bulb is a symbol for understanding something. It's as if the person were in the dark, and the light was suddenly switched on. Today, we will see the "light bulb moment" in the life of Jesus' loyal disciple, John.

Very early in the morning, a woman named Mary Magdalene, along with some other women who loved Jesus, went to the tomb with spices and perfume. They arrived shortly after the angel had rolled back the stone.

Seeing the stone rolled away, and no guards around, Mary thought that someone had stolen Jesus' body (John 20:2). She ran back to tell the disciples. Stunned to hear this news, Peter and John ran to the tomb as fast as they could. John arrived first. He saw strips of linen cloth lying outside the tomb. He stopped in his tracks; he did not go in. Peter was the boldest of all the disciples. When he arrived moments later, he did not hesitate to run right into the tomb.

+ *He saw the strips of linen lying there. He also saw the burial cloth that had been around Jesus' head. The cloth was folded up by itself. It was separate from the linen. - John 20:6b-7*

Then John followed Peter into the tomb. The Bible says, "He saw and believed." (John 20:8b) When John saw that Jesus was not there, he believed that God had raised Him from the dead.

For John, until this very moment, he did not understand how everything fit together. Before now, he mistakenly believed everything had gone wrong - spinning out of God's control. He didn't understand that all the events that took place had been foretold in God's word (John 12:16). He didn't realize that all the terrible things (Jesus' arrest, crucifixion, and death) had to happen in order for the BEST thing to happen (sin taken away and victory over death). But when John gazed in wonder at the empty tomb, the truth became clear. Jesus had risen! Death was defeated!

***** It is important for us to know that God is in control, and He ALWAYS keeps His promises (Titus 1:2). Get to know God's promises by reading His word, then rest in His wonderful promises. (Start with John 10:28.)

Day #3: Mary's Worship

One of the women who cared deeply about Jesus, and who remained at the foot of the cross, was Mary Magdalene.


Before she met Jesus, this Mary had been tortured by evil spirits, or demons. She was controlled by evil; she lived in pain and darkness. But then Jesus stepped into her life.

Day #3 continued:

In His loving mercy and total power, He cast the demons out of her (Luke 8:2). Jesus broke the bonds of evil in Mary's life. He transformed Mary's life completely.

From that day on, Mary believed in Jesus. Sometimes she traveled with Jesus and the disciples, and she used her own money to pay for the needs of Jesus and His men (Luke 8:3). Mary wanted everyone to know about Jesus and His ability to set them free from sin and darkness.


Mary was with Peter and John at the empty tomb. Peter and John left the tomb and went home. But Mary stood outside the tomb and cried because she didn't realize that Jesus had risen. She thought that someone had taken His body. She looked into the tomb and saw two men. They were actually angels who asked her why she was crying (John 20:10-12). She explained that she was looking for Jesus.

 *Then she turned around and saw Jesus standing there. But she didn't realize that it was Jesus.*

"Woman," He said, "why are you crying? Who are you looking for?"


She thought He was the gardener. So she said, "Sir, did you carry Him away? Tell me where You put Him. Then I will go and get Him." - John 20:14-15

Then Jesus tenderly called her by name, "Mary." Upon hearing her name, Mary recognized the voice of her beloved Savior. She cried out, "Teacher!" and fell down at His feet and worshipped Him (Matthew 28:9).

 Jesus had set Mary free from her shame and sin. Now she knew He rose again to give her new life. She couldn't help but worship Him. We who believe in Jesus have been given the same gift as Mary. Take time, now, to stop and worship Jesus. Sing a worship song or shout out His wonderful characteristics.

Day #4: False Report


Some of the guards went and reported what had happened to the chief priests. We would think that when they heard about Jesus rising from the dead they would finally believe in Him. But this was not the case.

 *When the chief priests met with the elders, they came up with a plan. They gave the soldiers a large amount of money. They told the soldiers, "We want you to say, 'His disciples came during the night. They stole his body while we were sleeping.'" - Matthew 28:12-13*

Even when the chief priests and leaders heard from eye witnesses that the earth trembled, an angel came from heaven, the stone was rolled away, and Jesus came back to life and walked out of the tomb on His own, they still would not admit who Jesus was! There could be NO other explanation for these events other than that Jesus was truly the Messiah, the Son of God. Still they rejected Him. And, the very soldiers who saw the amazing sight with their own eyes took the money and did what they were told. Some people still believe this lie.

Day #4 continued:

Both the soldiers and the leaders knew the truth, but they refused to place their trust in Jesus to take away their sin and give them new life.


 It is not enough for us to know the facts that Jesus was God's Son and that He died on a cross. The Bible says that even Satan and his demons know the facts about Jesus (James 2:19). But they do not choose to put their trust in Jesus and follow Him!

You must not only know the facts about Jesus, but you must believe that He died to pay the penalty for your sin. You must put your trust in Him in order to be set free from your sin and given new life.

Day #5: New Life

Take a clean white sheet of paper. This will be a symbol of people as God created them - good and pure. But then they chose to sin. Scribble on the paper with a pencil, and tear the paper. Is the paper still pure or perfect? No. Sin ruins everything. How can you fix this paper? Try to erase your marks and tape it back together. How does it look now? There is **nothing** you can do to make it perfect again. This is a picture of our lives. Once we sin, we cannot make ourselves pure again. But our amazing God can!

It was part of God's plan - from the very beginning - that He would not only take away our sin, but He would give us new life. God's perfect plan would restore the goodness and perfection that He created in the beginning.


 *Just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives. - Romans 6:4b NLT*

If you believe in Jesus, not only is the penalty of your sin paid for, but God also gives you **new life!** You are reborn with a new heart and mind. Your new heart and mind no longer have to sin (Romans 6:6-7). Now you have the desire and the ability to do what is right in God's eyes (Titus 2:11-12).

God fills you with His Holy Spirit who helps you understand God's truth, and gives you the power to teach it to others (John 7:39, 16:3, Acts 1:8). Unlike the way we used to live, God's Holy Spirit helps you live in love, joy, peace, and kindness toward others (Galatians 5:22-23).

All this comes from God (2 Corinthians 5:18). He died to take away your sin and to give you new life. All we do is believe and receive!

Anyone who believes in Christ is a new creation. The old is gone! The new has come! - 2 Corinthians 5:17

 Throw out your marked and torn piece of paper. (The old is gone!) Get a fresh, new, clean sheet of paper. (The new has come!) If you have trusted in Jesus, read this verse with your name in it.

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